(b) The gap between the demand and the indigenous production is presently being met through imports of crude oil and petroleum products. In order to increase the production of petroleum products, the refining capacity in the country is proposed to be increased by setting up new refineries and by taking up expansion/debottlenecking projects in some of the existing refineries. Steps are also being taken to increase crude oil production which, inter alia include intensification of exploration which may eventually lead to enhanced production, intensification of work-over operations and use of enhanced oil recovery techniques. The prices of selected petroleum products such as motor spirit and HSD have been recently revised upwards to contain the rate of growth in demand for petroleum products.

Import of crude oil during the year 1990

1454. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of the countries from which Government are importing crude oil during the year 1990;

(b) what is the currency in which payment would be made;

(c) by when the above imported crude is likely to reach the country; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to lessen the import of crude?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) In the year 1989-90 we have term contracts for the import of crude oil with USSR, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, UAE and Kuwait. Term contracts for 1990-91 have not been finalised. With USSR, the term contract is on calendar year basis for 1990. In addition, spot purchases are made from producers/traders of crude oil all over the world except certain prohibited countries like South Africa and Israel.

(b) All payments are made in U.S. dollars except for imports from USSR where payments are made in Rupees.

(c) The imports are phased over the entire year to meet the demand and operational requirements of the refineries.

(d) Steps being taken to reduce imports of crude oil include (i) increase in crude all production by intensification of exploration activities, intensification of work over operations and use of enhanced over recovery techniques, (ii) increase in refining capacity, and (iii) effecting economy in the use of petroleum products by efforts towards increasing fuel efficiency in user sectors.

Recently the prices of some petroleum products such as Motor spirit and HSD were raised to contain the rate of growth of demand for these products.

Help extended by Airbus Consortium in the investigation of Airbus AB-320 crash

1455. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a team of experts from the European Airbus Consortium has come to India to help in the investigation of the crash of Indian Airlines Airbus AB-320 on the 14th February, 1990 at Bangalore airport; and

(b) if so, what kind of help was given by the above team?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): (a) and (b) Following the crash of A-320 aircraft at Bangalore, an accredited reprentative of French Investigation Bureau alongwith his technical advisers of Airbus Industries were in India to provide technical information on the A-320 aircraft required for investigation.